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8 March 1960

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

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III. THE WEST

Greece - Common Market: [In an effort to accelerate favorable action on Greece's bid for association with the Common Market, Premier Karamanlis has warned ambassadors from the Common Market countries that failure to take such action may force Greece into closer economic ties with the Soviet bloc. Opposition circles in Athens, pointing to widespread unemployment and growing surpluses, are waging an intensive campaign against the government's reluctance to increase trade with the bloc. Greek officials expect the USSR will attempt to exploit the situation during the scheduled April visit to Athens of the Soviet minister of foreign trade by making attractive proposals involving either a large-scale loan or an offer to absorb surplus agricultural products.]

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West Indies: Prospects for a mutually satisfactory revision of the 1941 Caribbean bases agreement at the planned US - UK - West Indies conference have received a setback. Premier Williams privately declared on 4 March that he was washing his hands of the tripartite conference and would not be bound by anything the Federation Government negotiated. The status of the US base at Chaguaramas, Trinidad, is one of the principal issues for the proposed conference. Williams said that he would consider the 1941 base agreement no longer binding after the Federation achieves independence--a step which may come as early as 1961. [REDACTED] (Page 3)

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DAILY BRIEF

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III. THE WEST

Greece - Common Market

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[Greek officials have warned that continued delay in associating Greece with the European Economic Community (EEC or Common Market) may force Athens to accept closer economic ties with the Soviet bloc. Premier Karamanlis, in conversation on 4 March with the ambassadors from Belgium, West Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Italy, complained about the "unsatisfactory progress" in drawing up terms of association. He mentioned the projected visit to Athens next month of Soviet Minister of Foreign Trade Patolichev and said that uncertainty about his country's relations with the Common Market might compel his government to "make ties" with the USSR.]

[The Greek Government asked last summer to become associated with the EEC. The member governments' immediate reaction was favorable, and Greece's association was accepted "in principle." Subsequent negotiations on specific terms have been slow, however, and Greek requests for a special schedule for reducing tariffs, help in disposing of tobacco stocks, and financial assistance for economic development have raised problems for the EEC countries. Nevertheless, EEC officials expect to open formal negotiations with the Greeks on 16 or 17 March.]

[The Karamanlis government has lost much of the credit it received for having secured the original acceptance "in principle." Growing unemployment and agricultural surpluses have brought about a marked deterioration of the economy. Opposition politicians have seized on the delay in effecting EEC association to renew their attacks on the government for failing to respond favorably to the bloc's professed willingness to absorb Greece's surplus agricultural products. The USSR can be expected to attempt to exploit this situation with offers of economic aid--probably during Patolichev's visit.]

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Trinidad's Stand Dims Prospects for New West Indian
Bases Agreement

Prospects for the planned US-UK-West Indies Federation talks to revise the 1941 Caribbean bases agreement received a setback on 4 March when Premier Williams of Trinidad declared privately that he "washed his hands" of the conference and would not be bound by anything the Federation Government negotiated. Inclusion of the Federation in the US-UK talks, agreed to in December, has not satisfied Williams. The Trinidad premier first claimed that the importance of the naval base and guided-missile tracking facility at Chaguaramas entitled Trinidad itself to a conference seat and he now wants bilateral talks with the United States.

West Indies representatives are expected to meet shortly to formulate the Federation's position at the talks. They will probably request return of deactivated areas, a shorter-than-99-year lease, and compensation for areas used. There is little controversy over US-leased sites other than Chaguaramas.

Williams has long sought to reduce US base rights and obtain Chaguaramas for the federal capital. He considers that the 1941 agreement would not be binding after the Federation achieves independence--a step which may come as early as 1961. He apparently wants to delay negotiations until he personally is in a stronger position. It is still possible that Williams may become the federal prime minister. At present, Williams says he is "persecuted" by the United States, the British, and the Federation Government.

Williams has threatened to give a free hand to the Trotskyite editor of his party's newspaper, and implied he might spread charges of germ warfare and step up his campaign alleging that US activities at Chaguaramas pose a radiation hazard to Trinidad.

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